

**Agency: Department of Transportation/Public Facilities****Project Title:**

## Palmer Wasilla Highway Improvements Phase II

**State Funding Requested: \$ 5,000,000****House District: Mat-Su Areawide (13-16)**

Future Funding May Be Requested

**Brief Project Description:**

Continued funding for the reconstruction of the Palmer Wasilla Highway.

**Funding Plan:****Total Cost of Project: \$200,000,000**Funding SecuredOther Pending RequestsAnticipated Future Need*Amount FY**Amount FY**Amount FY*

There is no other funding needed

**Detailed Project Description and Justification:**

Continued funding for the reconstruction of the Palmer Wasilla Highway.

**Project Timeline:**

2008-2009

**Entity Responsible for the Ongoing Operation and Maintenance of this Project:**

Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

**Grant Recipient Contact Information:**

Contact Name: Gordon Keith

Phone Number: 907-269-0770

Address: PO Box 196900, Anchorage, AK 99519-6900

Email: gordon.keith@alaska.gov

Has this project been through a public review process at the local level and is it a community priority? ☒ Yes ☐ No



**Bill Allen**  
**City Manager**

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March 21, 2008

The Honorable Lyda Green  
Senate President  
Alaska State Legislature  
State Capitol, Room 111  
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Dear President Green:

Your support of vital capital projects for the Valley is greatly appreciated, and your office has been extremely helpful in working with the City of Palmer toward our mutual goals during this legislative session.

I am writing to provide information highlighting the importance of Valley-specific funding requests. The City of Palmer supports inclusion of the following projects in SB 256 and encourages Governor Palin to allow for their funding in the supplemental budget. They are important for the safety of Valley residents, and for continued economic development of the Greater Palmer area.

Mat-Su Baseball, Inc.

- Over 15,000 citizens utilize and visit the ballpark annually
- Hermon Brothers Ball Field is home to both Palmer and Colony High Schools in the spring; hosts the Mat-Su Miners semi-pro team in the summer; and is used by the Alaska State Fair from August through Labor Day
- Multiple users ensure state dollars are maximized, however the only time the field is available for improvements is Labor Day through October
- Funding in the supplemental bill allows for supplies to be purchased, contractors hired, and work to start immediately after the Alaska State Fair concludes on September 2; if funding is delayed another construction season is lost
- The funds will rebuild the 32 year old outfield fence which is literally falling down; replace the backstop originally installed in 1976; and re-build the concession stand which provides a funding stream throughout the entire season which helps keep the non-profit sustainable.

Palmer Arts Council

- The Performing Arts Center will serve several thousand people for productions in the 300-seat theater within the first year of opening, and will provide arts and arts education summer events and camps for residents and summer visitors
- Upwards of 1,000 children will participate in active programs and enrichment activities at the Center
- The supplemental funding will provide land clearing, demo of the existing old construction, potential hazardous waste cleanup and property inspection
- Delay in initiating the planned Arts Center will cause the project to incur up to a 10% increase in annual building costs, and will cause costs to accrue on the acquired but unused property. Additional funding resources, including solicitation of grants and other revenue sources are dependent on and will follow the initial State funding

#### Valley Community for Recycling Solutions

- State Funds are vital to attract other funding – 2.5 million in matching funds have been appropriated by the Borough but will not be released until VCRS has all funding in place. The Rasmuson Foundation has expressed an interest in the project, but will not provide lead money
- Delaying the project to the fiscal year budget will cause the entire effort to be set back another year causing economic hardship to the organization and potentially the Borough
- The project will have a positive economic impact on the Borough as trash is diverted from the landfill – six million dollars in public money has been spent since 2004 in the design and construction of new cells at the landfill
- The temporary facility is unsafe; the building is falling down causing much work to be completed outside in one of the windiest spots in the Borough
- The temporary location is immediately adjacent to one of the busiest intersections on the 5<sup>th</sup> most dangerous road in the state
- VCRS has a 40% annual growth rate in people recycling without any overt advertising – a new facility is needed now

#### Palmer High School (PHS) Bleachers


- The funding for bleachers will complete last year's appropriation and provide safety consideration for attendees at PHS events
- This will allow for the construction of safety steps for the internal bleachers and provide a concrete pad for the external bleachers, allowing both accommodation for handicapped access and facilitation of future expansion
- The internal bleachers accommodate in excess of 667 (current student population at PHS), and the external bleachers allow for seating of up to 300 people per event

#### Palmer-Wasilla Highway Improvements

- The Palmer-Wasilla Highway is the 5<sup>th</sup> most dangerous road in the State, serving approximately 14,500 vehicles per day (2005) just west of Palmer. Traffic is anticipated to grow to over 40,000 vehicles per day by 2030, even with the Bogard Road Extension to Palmer
- Work must begin now and must be pursued vigorously and continuously to keep up with growing traffic and to keep the Palmer-Wasilla Highway from moving up any higher on the list of dangerous roads

Thank you for your hard work on our behalf.

Best personal regards,



B. B. Allen